

Minutes of the Sparta Fire Board Meeting

December 21, 2017

Sparta Fire Station

Present: Bergman (twp-chair), Momber (twp), Van Patten (village), Dougan (village) and Goodfellow (twp), Taylor (village) & Bradford (twp).

Also, present: Chief Bolen, Deputy Chief Olney

Absent: none

Bergman called the meeting to order @ 7:03 pm

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion: Made by **Van Patten** to approve the agenda.

Seconded: Momber

Motion Passed: 7 -0

Public Comment: none

Approval of the Minutes:

Motion: Made by **Momber** to approve November 16, 2017 minutes.

Seconded: Van Patten

Motion Passed: 7-0

Approval of Bills:

Motion: Made by **Van Patten** to approve bills through December 18, 2017

Seconded: Momber

Motion Passed: 6-1 (Taylor dissenting)

Chief's Report: The Chief reported that last month there was a total of 109 calls and 1221 YTD. Last month there were 75 medical and emergency calls. There were power wires down where the department responded. (4) fire calls, house fire, farm machinery fire, controlled burn and one fire assist in Kent City. There was (1) PDA accident with several injuries and (1) accident with no injuries.

Med 3 hybrid proposal: The Chief presented his Med 3 proposal with is somewhat like what Alpine Fire Department uses. The question was asked of the Chief & Deputy Chief what calls will be eliminated or not responded to under the new proposal. Deputy Olney stated; broken bones, falls, mental/suicide calls and general weakness related calls would most likely not be responded to. The KCEMS over sees the E911 dispatch and ALS responds and determines the status of the calls. KCEMS requires that an ALS be on site within 20 minutes, ALS will only invoice/bill the patient if there is a transport, ALS is proposing to re-open the 13 mile and M37 location. The Chief's proposed a modified Med 3 plan that would only require SFD to respond if one of following criteria is meet:

Fall/Lift and assist: ALS will request the E911 dispatch to call SFD after ALS sets the priority level. (if ALS needs assistance in lifting or moving a patient). Changed to "after ALS sets the priority level" Per Dan Olney and current ALS & E911 dispatch process.

Medical Alarms: ALS will request the E911 dispatch to call SFD if they can't get a response from a medical alarm patient.

Environmental Variables: ALS will request the E911 dispatch to call SFD if the person is in extreme heat or cold related environment and request assistance.

Request of ALS: ALS will request the E911 dispatch to call SFD if ALS can't be on site within a normal response time.

Motion by Taylor to have Bergman send a letter to Kent County rescinding that SFD be dispatched on all Med 3's.

Seconded: Dougan.

Board discussion; why would we terminate all Med 3's without a board agreed upon modified Med 3 plan.

Motion Failed: 2-5 (Bergman, Momber, Bradford, Goodfellow and Van Patten dissenting)

Deputy Chief Olney stated that with the proposed Med 3 hybrid plan, the SFD should reduce the Med 3 calls by approximately 400 calls per year and an annual saving of approximately \$10,000.00.

Motion by Taylor to have Kent County E911 implement the proposed SFD Med 3 hybrid plan. (Bergman and Fire Chief) to send the Med 3 hybrid plan to Kent County E911 and to have Bergman/Chief send a letter to Kent County rescinding the SFD request to be dispatched on all Med 3's by January 1, 2018.

Seconded: Van Patten.

Motion Passed: 7-0

Updated Job Descriptions:

Deputy Chief presented the Deputy Chief and Firefighter/Medical First Responder job description which was not included in the board package. The board reviewed all the other Job Descriptions and made several changes and asked for additional information in some of the job descriptions. The changes and corrections will be made and presented at the next board meeting.

Fire Department Wages:

The Chief presented his proposed hourly wage increases for the different Firefighters classifications, Lieutenant, Captain, Deputy Chief, Chief, Master Mechanic, Weekend Standby and Nightly Stipend. Questions were asked if the new increase were in line with other departments. Chief and Deputy Chief stated yes and that the board had received at other board meetings a wage summary of other departments in the area. (I've attached the latest 2017 Wage Summary from the local fire departments.) The board asked if there was room in proposed 2018-2019 budget to accommodate the increased wages. The Chief stated that he'd have to cut some other expenses, but he thought he could cover the wage increase within his proposed budget.

Motion by Taylor to approve the proposed salary increases effective January 1, 2018 as presented by the Chief (see attached salary changes)

Seconded: Van Patten.

Motion Passed: 7-0

Outsource non-Administrative Assistant's duties: The Chief presented quotes for services currently completed by the Administration Assistant or services provided by the Chief without any compensation.

Winter Snow services: In the past, the Chief did all the snow removal, pushing and clearing of Snow for the fire station and fire house for free. The Chief only received one quote for an annual fee and a per

time removal snow removal. Annual fee \$1,950.00 plus salting applications. The Board asked the Chief to get additional quotes for the service. In the interim, the Chief will have Water Works continue to remove the snow on a per time bases.

Station and Fire House Cleaning: The Chief presented only one quote from Service Master of Kent County for cleaning the fire house and fire station. The Chief recommended twice a week service, annual quote was for \$9,150.24. The board asked the Chief to get additional quotes for service. Dougan stated that the Village had just contracted out their office cleaning with Kleen Office Environment, the Chief stated he would also try and get a quote from them.

Turnout Gear Clearing and Repair: The Chief stated that the biggest issue in finding a company to clean the "Turnout Gear" is that the company doing the work must be in compliance with NFPA 1851-2013 standards. The Chief has been working locally with Sparta Cleaners who originally stated that they were not sure if they could comply with the NFPA standards. After reviewing the NFPA standards the Sparta Cleaners will be submitting a written quote for the cleaning service.

The Chief also presented a quote from Turnout Management from Livonia MI for the services. The quote is approximately \$45.00 per set of turnout gear plus shipping between Livonia and Sparta. The cleaning of turnout gear would make the gear out of service for at least (1) week or more.

The SFD currently uses Douglas Safety Systems for repairs on any turnout gear that need to be done.

The Board asked if there were any other quotes, Deputy Olney stated that East Grand Rapids went through the same process and Turnout Management was the only one within the state of MI. He stated that the East Grand Rapids Fire Department ended up purchasing their own commercial washer and dryer. Olney stated that the East Grand Rapids Fire Fighters do their own cleaning as they are full time employees and at the station.

The Board asked the Chief to submit an estimate of the number of turnout gear sets would be cleaned in a normal year and get a firm quote from Sparta Cleaners. The Chief stated he would provide the information for the next meeting.

Chief's Evaluation report: Goodfellow fill the board in on the input he received from each board member to complete a "Summary Evaluation" for the Chief. The Board and the Chief each received the final evaluation summary. The Chief stated he agreed with some of the statements but took exception to other statement: "Team Development is weak as is evidenced by the loss of experienced and long serving firefighters in recent months". He stated the statement was incorrect. There hasn't been any loses to the department in over 6 months and loses prior to that were because several fire fighters had left the township or area. He asked the board member for any names to substantiate their statement, the board member provided no names. The Chief also questioned the statement about his leadership, he stated he lead the department by training, example and direction he provided.

Chief's Contract: Bergman presented to the board an extensive list of positive items taken from the McGrath study for the Sparta Fire Department. Under the direction of Chief Bolen and the department, they were responsible for these positive items. Bergman stated that considering all the recommendations in the McGrath study, he'd recommend that the Chief Bolen's contract be extended for 6 months and be reevaluated at the end of that term. Dougan asked would the extended contract be the same language as the existing one. Bergman suggested it should be and Chief Bolen agreed with that.

Motion by Bradford to extend Chief's Bolen's existing contract for 6 additional months. January 1, 2018 through June 30, 2018.

Seconded: Momber.

Motion Passed: 5-2 (Taylor & Dougan dissenting)

Administrative Assistance – Potential Problems with Nepotism: Bergman stated that Jerry and Nancy were hired as a team. Bergman stated that Nepotism has existed in the Village and other neighboring townships for years and went on to list the names of many examples. Dougan stated that most of examples were elected positions to which Bergman stated; “that just means the voters were not concerned with nepotism”. Dougan asked if the board should get a legal opinion first before moving forward with any decisions. It was the consensus of the board to have Bergman contact the SDF attorney for a legal opinion if there were any issues with Nancy reporting to the Chief.

Kent County Contract for Platform #5: The Chief presented the contract for Provision of Kent County Contribution towards Purchasing of a Aerial Fire Apparatus. The County is making a one-time contribution payment of \$196,000 after January 12, 2018 upon an executed agreement. Taylor asked if the any maintenance is being covered on this vehicle. The Chief stated that yes, the county is providing some maintenance under the terms of Exhibit A paragraph 4. The Chief also presented the board a copy the title (not a salvage title) for the Spartan Aerial truck.

Motion by Dougan to approve/sign the contract with Kent County for one-time contribution payment of \$196,000 for the Aerial Fire Apparatus.

Seconded: Van Patten.

Motion Passed: 7-0

Budget Approval Process: Dougan stated that the Village had only approved the fire department funding at the same fate as the previous year because the village received no formal budget request from the Chief. The Chief stated that no one from the Village asked him to attend their budget meeting or even told him of a date when the budget meeting was to take place. Taylor stated that according to the joint agreement “The proposed budget shall be submitted to the Township and Village by November 1st for approval.

Bergman stated that the Fire Board approved the Chief’s proposed budget at the October 19, 2017 meeting. Goodfellow stated the minutes of the October 19th meeting and the fire board approved budget was sent/submitted to all board members, village manager and township members on October 22. The Chief stated he’s been doing his for 12 years and was always invited to a budget meeting to present his budget. Bergman stated, the township always calls and personally invites everyone who is asking for township funding. Bergman asked Dougan to have the Chief be able to present the SFD budget request at the next Village meeting and have the Village Board vote on SFD funding request. Dougan stated she would add the Chief/Fire Department budget request on the January 8th 2018 Village meeting.

Next Regular Meeting Date

January 18th, 2018 at 7:00 pm at the Sparta Fire Station

Public Comment:

Shawn Morton commented again that communications between the Village, Township and Fire Board has broken down. He stated he’s made the statement before that communications are Key to having a successful board. You need to work together and eliminated the huge tension that exists today if you want any success. He stated the Village and Township need to sit down and work these issues out.

Bob Whalen stated, it was a sad meeting and he was disappointed in the action and comments of some of the board members. He stated the budget process use to work fine, now it changed and not for the better. **There are new expectations for submitting the budget so deal with it and move on.**

Motion: Made by **Member** to adjourn at 9:55 pm

Seconded: Bradford

Motion Passed: 6-0 (Taylor had left the meeting)

Minutes by **Goodfellow** 12-25-17

Finance meeting dates: January 2nd and 16th at 4:00 PM township offices.